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"The Old Franklin Street Church and its First Pastors."

A PAPER

READ BY

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ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, CANTON, MASS.,

BEFORE THE

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THE OLD FRANKLIN STREET CHURCH AND ITS PASTORS.

ONE hundred years ago the Catholics of Boston were assembled for a time in the little church on School street, which was leased for the purpose from the Huguenots, and administered to for a while by the Rev. Mr. Thayer, a convert to the faith. The congregation did not prove permanent; as the lease expired, the property was devoted to other uses, and Mr. Thayer was sent to other fields of labor.

About the year 1792, several Catholic priests, exiled from their beloved France by the terrors of the French Revolution, landed together in Baltimore. One of these, the Rev. Dr. Matignon, Regius professor in the college of Navarre, was sent by Bishop Carroll to Boston. "The talents of Dr. Matignon," says a writer who knew him well, "were of the highest order." In him were united a sound understanding, a rich and vigorous imagination, and logical precision of thought. His learning was extensive, critical and profound. The early fathers of the Church and the great divines of every age were his familiar friends. His divinity was not merely speculative, nor merely practical. It was the blended influence of thought, feeling and action. The wise bowed to his superior knowledge, and the humble caught the spirit of his devotion. In manner he was an accomplished gentleman, possessing that kindness of heart and delicacy of feel-

ing which made him suit the wants and anticipate the wishes of all he knew. Born and educated in the bosom of refinement, he had associated with chevaliers and nobles, had been the friend of cardinals, prelates and premiers. Amenity and urbanity had at all times been a distinguished characteristic of the French people, and the clergy of France were the flower and pride of the nation. When Dr. Matignon came to Boston, severe trials awaited him. He found the people of New England more than suspicious about the designs he had in view. Absurd and foolish legends of the Pope and Popery had been handed down from father to son since the first colonization of New England, and a prejudice of undefined and undefinable dislike, if not hatred, of everything connected with Rome, reigned supreme in the minds of the Puritan community.

It required a thorough acquaintance with the world to know precisely how to meet these sentiments of a whole people. Dr. Matignon was exactly fitted to encounter all these difficulties; and he saw them and knew the extent of his task. With meekness and humility he disarmed the proud; with prudence, learning and wisdom he met the captious and slanderous; and so gentle and so just was his course that even the censorious forgot to watch him, and the malicious were too cunning to attack one armed so strong in his poverty. The mission of Boston embraced at that time the whole of New England and the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy tribes of Indians; that is to say, a territory of more than 300 miles in extent, over which the Catholics were scattered, and so far removed from each other that it was impossible to assemble them for the public exercises of religion. The missionaries themselves were obliged to travel over this vast region, to go and preach the gospel to families one after another, at a distance of sometimes two or three hundred miles, to administer the sacraments and to offer mass in each dwelling; for, even supposing they could have been assembled, there was no church in which to gather. The difficulties of which we have been speaking as to New England were infinitely greater among the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians. Wandering in the woods on the

borders of the State of Maine, hundreds and hundreds of miles from Boston, to preach among them, required an absence of several months from the heart of the mission. Dr. Matignon earnestly prayed for some one to assist him in this great work. His labors were greater than the strength of a single individual could sustain. He wished to procure a fellow-laborer who should divide with him the heavy burden. The thoughts of Dr. Matignon turned to Dr. Cheverus, whose rare worth and amiable charaeter he had justly appreciated at the Sorbonne when he was a professor there. He wrote to him on the subject in 1795, and represented to him the great importance of this destitute station; set before his view a new church to be formed in this new country. The friends of Dr. Cheverus strove to retain him in England until better times should allow his return to France. But the letter of his zealous friend Dr. Matignon made a great impression upon him. He prayed, asked counsel, weighed all the reasons on both sides of the question, and at length, after such hesitation as prudence demanded, he decided to join Dr. Matignon.

A new and touching sight was then witnessed in Boston. Two men, examples of every virtue, living together as brothers, without distinction of property, with no difference of purpose or of will, always ready to yield to each other, to anticipate each other in rendering the most polite and delicate attentions; possessing, in truth, but one heart and one soul; filled with the same desire, that of doing good; the same inclinations, those which pointed to virtue, and the same love of whatever is good, upright and charitable. A Protestant journal, in speaking of them, says:—

"Those who witnessed the manner in which they lived together will never forget the refinement and elevation of their friendship. It surpassed those attachments which delight us in classical story, and equalled the lovely union of the son of Saul and the minstrel of Israel."

To the example of a union which religion alone could render so perfect, they added that of a life of poverty and privation, but honorable and dignified, passed wholly in prayer, in study, or the labors of ministry; that is to say,

in perfecting themselves, or rendering mankind wiser and better. They did good whenever an occasion presented itself, and blushed to find it fame. They exhausted their strength in journeyings and toils, travelling on foot at all hours of the day and night, and at all seasons of the year, to carry, often many miles distant, consolation to the afflicted, secret assistance to the indigent, words of reconciliation to families at variance; in short, they sacrificed themselves without reserve for their fellow-men, and regarded all their sacrifices as nothing. Such a beautiful exhibition of virtue could not fail to strike the inhabitants of Boston with astonishment, and every man's conscience exclaimed: "Are these the Catholics about whom we have heard so many evil things,—the papists who have been depicted to us in colors so dark?"

When Dr. Cheverus had been in Boston a year, a Protestant came to him and addressed him in language remarkable for its candor. "Sir," said he, "I have studied you closely for a whole year; I have watched all your steps and observed all your actions. I did not believe that a minister of your religion could be a good man. I come to make you the reparation which honor demands. I declare to you that I esteem and venerate you as the most virtuous man I have ever known." A Protestant journal informs us that a minister, wishing to bring over to his own denomination men whose virtues and learning were so much talked of in the town, visited them one day for the purpose of endeavoring to convince them of the falsity of their religious belief and the excellence of his own. Struck by the simplicity of the undertaking, they received the clergyman kindly, thanked him for his benevolent intentions, and after having heard patiently all he had to say, replied with so much clearness to what he had advanced, and defended the Catholic faith with so much ability, that he was confounded and knew not what to answer. On his return to the friends to whom he had communicated his design, he said: "These men are so learned, there is no doing anything with them in argument, and so pure and evangelical in their lives, there is no reproaching them, and I fear it will give us much trouble to check their influence."

To contempt had succeeded esteem and even veneration. In contemplating them, says the Protestant journal already quoted : —

"The pagan world was full of instances of lofty and virtuous conduct. The hero, the seer and the sage had existed before Christianity was known, but a *saint* is a character which has been *added* to the catalogue *since*. Socrates, the wise and good, had not, like St. John, a Master's bosom on which to lean his head, where all is purity and love."

After so favorable a change had taken place in public opinion, Dr. Cheverus could mount the pulpit and preach with confidence ; for men soon give up their prejudice against a religion whose ministers they revere. "His eloquence," says a Protestant journal, "was of the most persuasive order." Everything he said seemed to flow from pure and elevated feelings. His sermons were succinct and sweet effusions of piety and affection ; the seraphim seemed to have touched his lips with a coal from the altar of the Most High. Whatever might be the superiority of Dr. Cheverus in certain respects, he regarded himself only as a disciple and child of Dr. Matignon, doing nothing except by his orders and under his direction. He followed his advice even in regard to his sermons, and before he went into the pulpit everything had generally been arranged between them. An attentive and discriminating observer of society, he had marked the high esteem in which human learning and those who possessed it were held, the little consequence accorded to those who were unskilled in it, and the general taste for literary acquirements.

Hence he concluded that in order to relieve the reproach of ignorance which had been cast upon the Catholic clergy, and to win for his teachings that esteem and consideration which should attend the preacher, he must yield to no one in this respect ; that it was all in vain for a clergyman to be thoroughly acquainted with his own profession alone. The world, which accounts this learning as nothing, would not fail to stigmatize him with the reproach of ignorance, and consequently be but little disposed to listen to him and to believe him. He therefore applied himself to those studies

which were held in highest honor in Boston. He acquired such a perfect knowledge of English, says a journal published in the town, that he had made himself master of the difficulties of that language in its arrangement, construction and etymology. He read the distinguished authors in the language, whether in prose or in verse, and retained in his memory the finest portions and most striking passages they contained. The extent and variety of his information connected him with all the learned men of Boston. The literary societies of the town wished him to join them and attend their meetings. He aided to the utmost of his power the dissemination of knowledge and the means of instruction; and when Mr. Shaw was about founding the Athenaeum, he assisted him with his counsels and personal exertions, and even gave many books from his own library, so that he was considered in Boston as one of the personal friends and most ardent promoters of elegant literature. His work in Boston did not lead him to forget the Indians, and he would make periodical visits to them, spending months among them, sharing their poverty cheerfully, enduring every hardship, that he might administer to their spiritual wants. He writes from Pleasant Point, Oldtown, Me., the 30th of July:—

"My house is about ten feet square and eight feet high, and the church is as large again but not a great deal higher. In both, no other material than bark and a few logs of wood and sticks set up crosswise to support the bark. No windows, of course; the only opening is the door. This makes the church dark, and I can hardly read at the altar. The only piece of furniture in the house is a large table made of rough boards. The altar-piece is made of two pieces of broadcloth; the one of scarlet and the other of dark blue."

Such was the state of this mission and such the residence of the future cardinal. The Indians received him with great joy and with volleys of musketry. He addressed them on his arrival, and the next day offered up a solemn mass for the dead, the Indians to his surprise chanting the Latin responses, which they had learned from the first Jesuit missionaries, quite accurately. "What courage and patience,"

he exclaims, "in these first missionaries!" He was soon summoned back to Boston. The yellow fever was raging in Boston. Many had already fallen victims to it. Every imagination was carried away; each one trembled for fear of being attacked by a disease which was considered contagious. As soon as the fever appeared in any place, every one abandoned the house, and the sick person was left on his bed of pain, without assistance and without consolation. In this extremity Dr. Cheverus did not hesitate to devote himself entirely to the sick, and he was seen hastening from house to house, the apostle and attendant of all who were diseased. As soon as he heard of anyone being seized, whether Protestant or Catholic, he hastened to them like a consoling angel, pressed the hand of the sick person in his own, and spoke to him in a tone of voice, and with an expression of countenance that told his tender solicitude. He lavished upon them all the attention that could be desired, raising them, and placing them at ease on their beds, and rendering them services the most disgusting to nature; I would say the most humiliating, if charity did not ennoble every act she inspires. In vain did his friends represent to him that he should not thus expose himself, that he was putting in jeopardy a life which might be useful to religion and to society. Nothing could arrest him. "It is not necessary that I should live," he replied, "but it is necessary that the sick should be taken care of, that the dying should be assisted;" and during the whole time the fever prevailed, these exercises of charity, as laborious as they were perilous, were not intermitted for a single day.

Such was the generous devotedness of which Dr. Cheverus gave New England an example, not only on this occasion, but whenever that disease appeared again. Such noble conduct raised the veneration and attachment of the inhabitants of Boston to the highest pitch. From that time he was regarded as the apostle of charity and the champion of religion. Prejudice was silenced by respect for his person. When John Adams, President of the United States, visited Boston, Dr. Cheverus was invited to the magnificent dinner by which the city of Boston was to welcome the chief magistrate of the

Republic; and the two highest places were reserved for the President and himself. Mr. Adams, struck by this mark of respect paid to a Catholic priest in a city where but a few years ago the name alone was a title of scorn, could not avoid, during the repast, making this remark, addressing it to Dr. Cheverus: "What most astonishes me on this occasion is to find myself here and to see you here."

Thus they labored on, holding services in private houses converted into chapels, but having no proper church for the exercises of the Catholic religion until 1799. It was then impossible to find a place sufficiently large to hold either the Catholics, whose members were daily increased by large numbers of arriving emigrants, or the non-Catholics who desired to attend the services.

Dr. Cheverus therefore opened a subscription for the purpose of erecting a Catholic Church in Boston. The first subscriber was John Adams, the President of the United States. This conspicuous example by the Chief Magistrate of the Nation could not but find imitators, and the subscription list was soon filled with the most honorable names, both Protestant and Catholic. The site selected for the church was the one so many here remember, on Franklin street. The plan of the church was generously furnished by James Bulfinch, Esq. (the same who designed the present State-house), who kindly offered at the same time to superintend gratis the execution of it, for which he received the thanks of the congregation, together with an elegant silver urn, valued at about two hundred dollars, which was unanimously voted him by the congregation. The church measured 80 feet in length and 60 feet in width. It was of the Ionic order, and fronted on Franklin square. It had two spacious galleries and another for the organ and choir. The basement story was nine feet in the clear, of equal length and breadth with the church. The basement was of stone and the superstructure was of brick. The entire cost of the building was $20,000. Of this, members of the congregation subscribed $10,771.69; other Catholics, $1,948.83; Protestants, $3,433. The church was subsequently enlarged by Bishop Fenwick in the year 1827, by moving the gable end and making an

addition 72 feet in width and 40 feet in length, giving it a kind of cruciform appearance, as most will remember it. This addition gave room in the basement for large and convenient school-rooms. In the school, many who afterward became zealous laborers in the vineyard, commenced their studies,—among them Fr. Filton, Fr. Wiley, and the present Archbishop of Boston.

About this time ancient churches of France were reopened for Catholic worship. Pius VII. had just concluded with Bonaparte the compact of 1801, and, by virtue of the treaty, the French bishops and priests, who had been so long banished, returned to their homes, and experienced the double happiness of again beholding their own country and exercising their ministry in peace. The family and friends of Dr. Cheverus wrote to him earnestly requesting his return. The letter was most urgent, the reasons given most powerful. Bishop Carroll, of Baltimore, being apprised of the danger of losing so worthy a fellow-laborer, hastened to write him and conjure him not to leave his post, detailing to him with great force the reasons for remaining, and ending by declaring to him that he was convinced that such was the will of God. Dr. Cheverus immediately made the sacrifice to God, of his country and of all the affections that summoned him back to it, and announced to his flock that he should remain with them. The joy of the people may be better imagined than described, and to show their gratitude they made renewed and greater sacrifices for the completion of the church.

The church was soon finished, and Bishop Carroll, of Baltimore, came on to consecrate the new temple to the Lord. On the 29th of September, 1803, he dedicated the new edifice under the name of the "Church of the Holy Cross." The church was adorned with drapery and garlands, the altar embellished with rich ornaments and surrounded by clergymen. The crowd was immense; Protestants, Catholics, all wished to witness the ceremony; and finally Dr. Cheverus, by the discourse he preached on the occasion, gave the finishing stroke to the beauty of the celebration. On the evening of the celebration Dr. Cheverus had the exterior of the

church illuminated with all possible magnificence ; the whole front was resplendent with light, and the richly-gilded cross sparkled with myriad lights. All the inhabitants, without distinction, rejoiced in the beauty of the spectacle, complimented Dr. Cheverus, and seemed to share in his happiness.

The church, being dedicated, became the theatre of the most ardent and indefatigable zeal of Dr. Cheverus. He caused it to be decorated and provided with an organ ; the services were properly carried out according to the Roman ritual ; great crowds flocked to hear him, and he had the consolation of bringing back many of his erring brethren to the true faith. A Protestant journal, speaking of his sermons, says :—

"It is certain that his discourses are well calculated to remove prejudices against the Catholics ; and the moderation, and even affection, with which he speaks of men of a different belief from his own, forms a striking contrast to the violent and angry language that sometimes dishonors Protestant pulpits."

Many were led to embrace the Catholic faith. Among them were Mr. Thomas Wiley, a well-known citizen of Boston ; Mr. Samuel Bishop, a lawyer ; two Protestant ministers, a father and son. The father received minor orders and permission to preach, and the son became an exemplary and zealous priest of the Society of Jesus. Madam Seton, who afterwards became the founder of the Sisters of Charity at Seton Hall, N. J., owed her conversion to Dr. Cheverus.

While Dr. Cheverus was thus engaged in every good work his zeal found to do, Providence, unknown to him, was preparing for him the honors of the episcopate. Bishop Carroll, of Baltimore, thought it expedient to establish a new bishopric in Boston, and fixed on Dr. Matignon as the bishop, thinking on account of his age, his learning, and his reputation as late doctor and professor of the Sorbonne, he had claims on the office prior to Dr. Cheverus, who was still young. Just as he was about to send his petition to Rome, Dr. Matignon was informed of his intentions and remonstrated, and for-

mally refused the honor, proposing in his stead his friend, Dr. Cheverus. The request was favorably received, and on the 8th of April, 1808, Pius VII. issued his brief which erected Baltimore into an archbishopric, and appointed Dr. Cheverus as the first bishop of Boston. Dr. Cheverus was as much grieved as surprised, but the step had been taken, and he could but submit. He was consecrated in the cathedral church of Baltimore, All Saints' Day, 1810, by Bishop Carroll. Returning to Boston as a bishop, he continued, as before, to perform the humblest duties, visiting the poor and the sick, going alone on foot, at all hours of the day or night, to carry to the needy the consolations of his ministry. Every year he passed three months among his beloved Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians, agreeably to the promise he made them on his first visit.

Some time after, the Church of the United States suffered a severe loss in the death of its metropolitan, Archbishop Carroll, of Baltimore. Strong efforts were made to transfer Bishop Cheverus to Baltimore, to become the head of the Catholic Church in the United States. He protested strongly against the measure, and represented to those in authority that to tear him from Boston was to sacrifice the infant church here. He rejoiced when he was finally permitted to remain, and wrote a second letter to Rome asking the favor of never being separated from his beloved church in Boston.

Another sorrow was in store for him. For a considerable time Bishop Cheverus observed that his worthy friend, Abbe Matignon, was perceptibly declining. On the 19th of September, 1818, a day of peculiar grief to him, he administered the last sacraments to his friend and closed his eyes in death. The obsequies were carried out with great solemnity. The body was borne through the streets of the city with mournful chants, and he brought up the procession with the mitre on his head, surrounded by all the Catholics in tears. The inhabitants of Boston respected the funeral ceremonies, unwonted as they were, and showed that they honored the grief of Bishop Cheverus and the memory of his friend. The greatest order was observed throughout the procession, and the next day all the papers of the city tendered their

thanks to Bishop Cheverus for having so good an opinion of the friendly disposition of the people of Boston.

Bishop Cheverus now found himself alone and desolate. All the ministerial duties performed by his worthy friend now devolved on him. These multiplied toils impaired his health ; the asthma, from which he had long suffered, made alarming progress. The physicians declared to him that the only way to save his life was to go to a milder climate ; that otherwise the severity of the winters in Boston would bring him to the grave. But Bishop Cheverus would not desert his post. He determined to die in the country that had adopted him as a son. He marked out his place of sepulture beside his friend Dr. Matignon, and looked with calmness on his anticipated departure from this life. M. Hyde de Neuville, Ambassador of France to the United States, seeing with pain the health of the Bishop of Boston wasting away, had, on his return to Paris, made known to the King his great worth, and induced him to recall him and restore him to the kingdom to which by birth he already belonged. Louis XVIII. immediately appointed Bishop Cheverus to the see of Montauban, and directed the grand almoner to notify him of his appointment. This unexpected action greatly distressed the bishop. He earnestly petitioned the King to make some other appointment, and leave him to labor and to die with his beloved flock in Boston. The better to insure the success of his request, two hundred of the principal Protestants in the city added their entreaties and petitions, saying in their address to the King : —

"We hold him to be a blessing and a treasure in our social community which we cannot part with ; and which, without injustice to any man, we may affirm, if withdrawn from us, can never be replaced."

The King would not accept his refusal, and directed his grand almoner to insist strongly on his prompt return to France. The grand almoner immediately wrote a second letter to Bishop Cheverus, in which he urged, first, the express will of the King ; second, the state of his health ;

third, motives drawn from the situation of the clergy in France. Bishop Cheverus felt it was impossible to resist these urgent entreaties ; he thought he discovered in them the hand of Providence, more particularly as the physicians had just declared that his health could not endure another winter in the climate of Boston. His choice was made, but it cost him many pangs. He gave to the diocese his property. He left to the bishops who should succeed him his library. Finally, he distributed all the rest of his possessions to the poor ; and as he had come to Boston a poor man, he chose to depart poor, with no other wealth than the same trunk which, twenty-seven years before, he had brought with him. The people wished to present him with a well-filled purse, but this he declined. From all quarters adieus, expressions of regret, poured in on him. The Commercial Gazette of September 22, 1823, says : —

"This worthy dignitary of the Roman Catholic Church has been with us nearly thirty years, and during this period he has enjoyed the confidence and respect of all classes of people. The amenity of his manners as a gentleman, his tolerant disposition as a religious teacher, and his pure and apostolic life, have been our theme of praise ever since we have known him. We regret his departure as a public loss."

Mr. Samuel H. Russell, our late Director and friend, told me that a distinguished Protestant divine, a relative of his, was requested to give one of the Dudleian lectures, which was to show the so-called "errors and abominations of the Church of Rome." He replied he had not the heart to condemn a Church which gave to the ministry such apostolic men as his esteemed friend Bishop Cheverus. At the moment of his departure Dr. Cheverus received a new evidence of the attachment felt for him. A large number of people, both Protestant and Catholic, accompanied him several miles on his way to New York. Gentlemen of the very highest respectability followed the stage-coach on horseback or in other vehicles as far out as Walpole. Dr. Channing, the

well-known Unitarian divine, in years afterwards, thus speaks of Bishop Cheverus. I quote from the "Christian Examiner:"

"Has not the metropolis of New England," says Dr. Channing, "witnessed a sublime example of Christian virtue in a Catholic bishop? Who among our religious teachers would solicit a comparison between himself and the devoted Cheverus? This good man, whose virtues and talents have raised him to high dignities in Church and State, who now wears in his own country the joint honors of an Archbishop and a Peer, lived in the midst of us, devoting his days and nights, and his whole heart, to the service of a poor and uneducated congregation. We saw him declining, in a great degree, the society of the cultivated and the refined, that he might be the friend of the ignorant and friendless; leaving the circles of polished life which he would have graced, for the meanest hovels; bearing with a father's sympathy the burdens and sorrows of his large spiritual family; charging himself alike with their temporal and spiritual concerns; and never discovering, by the faintest indication, that he felt his fine mind degraded by his seemingly humble office. This good man, bent on his errands of mercy, was seen in our streets under the most burning sun of summer and the fiercest storms of winter, as if armed against the elements by the power of his charity. He has left us, but not to be forgotten. He enjoys among us what to such a man must be dearer than fame. His name is cherished where the great of this world are unknown. It is pronounced with blessings, with grateful tears, with sighs for his return in many an abode of sorrow and want." "How," he continues, "can we shut our hearts against this proof of the power of the Catholic religion to form good and great men? It is time," he adds, "that greater justice were done to this ancient and widespread community. The Catholic Church has produced some of the greatest and best men that ever lived, and this is proof enough of its possessing all the means of salvation."

After the departure of Bishop Cheverus, Pope Leo XII. appointed as his successor the Rev. Benedict Joseph Fenwick, who was born in Maryland, and was lineally descended from one of the two hundred families that originally came over from England under the charter of Lord Baltimore and settled in that State. He was consecrated at Baltimore, November 1, 1825, on the feast of All Saints, just fifteen years after the consecration of his predecessor. Upon his arrival at Boston, he entered the Cathedral of the Holy Cross on Franklin street and assumed charge of the diocese. Bishop Fenwick had many serious difficulties to encounter. He had only one clergyman in Boston to help him, Rev. Patrick Byrne, and one at Whitfield, Me., one hundred miles distant, and one at Claremont, N. H., Rev. V. H. Barber. Under his administrattion great progress was made, new churches were built, the number of the clergy increased, and provision was made for the fast-growing diocese. His health failing, the Rev. J. B. Fitzpatrick was appointed coadjutor bishop of Boston and consecrated March 24, 1844. This year also Dr. O. A. Brownson, a Unitarian clergyman, was received into the Catholic Church. This year, 1844, Rev. John J. Williams, the present Archbishop of Boston, was elevated to the priesthood. On the death of Bishop Fenwick, which occurred August 7, 1846, Bishop Fitzpatrick succeeded him as Bishop of Boston, and took up his abode at the episcopal residence next to the old Franklin Street Church. Of Bishop Fenwick, deceased, the "Advertiser" said: "He had many friends out of his own denomination and will be held in long and kindly remembrance for the good he has done in the community."

Bishop Fitzpatrick resided on Franklin street, next the church, until 1859, when the old cathedral property was sold to Isaac Rich. Owing to various legal complications, the deeds were not passed till September 30, 1860. The last service in the old cathedral was held September 16, 1860. With the funds received from the sale of the Franklin street property Bishop Fitzpatrick purchased, on October 24, 1860, the John D. Williams estate, corner of Washington and Malden streets, where the new cathedral now stands. He died at

the episcopal residence, (which had been purchased near the site of the new cathedral,) February 13, 1866, and was succeeded by Bishop John J. Williams, who had already been appointed coadjutor, with the right of succession. He was consecrated and entered upon the duties of his office, March 11, 1866.

Where at the beginning of our story there was in the old town of Boston, with its eighteen thousand inhabitants, a little band of one hundred Catholics, with one clergyman to attend to them (and the whole of New England as well), in greater Boston, with its half-million inhabitants, there are now fifty churches, with their archbishop and an auxiliary bishop and one hundred and fifty clergymen, while the Catholic people number more than half of the entire population.

With the wonderful development which we see around us in this our beloved city of Boston, in which we take so much pride, may we not hope that the cordial relations and the mutual respect and sympathy which existed between the first pastors of Franklin street and their non-Catholic fellow-citizens may among us ever continue and increase?

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